



Iron Knights News



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U.S. Army photo by Pvt. Christopher M. Gaylord, 13th Public Affairs Det.

Soldiers from Company C, 1st Battalion, 66th Armored Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division and eight Iraqi Army soldiers conducted an air assault mission near the town of Karabila to speak with local nationals, Saturday. For full story, see Page 5.

Changing perceptions among the Iraqi population

By Lt. Col. Scott McKean
Commander

Team Iron Knight:

First, let me tell you how extremely proud we are of our Soldiers in both their professionalism and their compassion. We have asked a lot of our Soldiers by posturing our bases amongst the population. The Soldiers have risen to the challenge and are changing the perceptions of many Iraqis. Their constant

presence in the villages has fostered a level of trust and confidence that has led to a decrease in sectarian violence, an increase in support against insurgents and terrorists, and the restoration of many basic services. Many locals have come to know and embrace our Soldiers as part of their community. Of course there are still those that will never care for us, but we have definitely turned the corner with many of the local leaders and their people.

The Iron Knights have worked

hard to improve the conditions for the people in our area. The companies have conducted Medical Operations to provide health care to local villagers who cannot readily access medical facilities. Civic projects have improved both the quantity and quality of water for villages, provided generators for schools and hospitals, and afforded many employment opportunities.

Some highlights since our last

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1st Bn., 66th AR Soldiers making a difference in Iraq

By Sgt. Maj. Grear Dale
Command Sergeant Major

First, I would like to say thanks to the Regulars (1st Battalion, 22nd Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division) for an outstanding relief in place and transfer of authority, getting us on the right track before taking over the Raider area of operation, thanks.

During this deployment our Soldiers skills will be challenged daily in a very complex environment. We began our training approximately eight months ago and I know we will put it to the test, continuing to execute where the Regulars left off, taking it to the enemy and maintaining a positive presences with the Iraqi people and its government.

Since arriving here in Iraq the officers,

noncommissioned officers, and Soldiers have had great success in all areas of operations at their respective patrol bases and on Forward Operating Base Raider. They have executed numerous missions gaining ground by eliminating a large amount of the sectarian violence, improvised explosive device threats, working with the Iraqi Army whom is taking a more important role in standing up their

government, and gaining trust from the local population, which is very important for the future of Iraq. This is a reflection of the training events that took place eight months ago, the Iron Knights prepared for this mission long before the deployment to Iraq which included cache searches, recovery missions, 9-line medical evaluations, IED/ 14-line unexploded

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Co. E brings med aid to Al Batha



*U.S. Army photos by Pfc. Tiffany Mercer
13th Public Affairs Det.*

Top: Pfc. Windy Klein, health care specialist, and Capt. Lekeisha Rodriguez, brigade nurse, both with Company C, 4th Support Battalion, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division administer aid to a local national who was wounded during a fire fight in Al Batha.

Left: Sgt. 1st Class Sarah Garcia, medical platoon sergeant, Co. C, 4th SB, 1st BCT, 4th Inf. Div. administers aid to a local national with a rash.

Right: A local national has his wrist bandaged during a medical aid mission to Al Batha Sunday.

Co. D finds three weapons caches in Karabila

Story and photos by Pvt.
Christopher M. Gaylord
13th Public Affairs Det.

Company D, 1st Battalion, 66th Armored Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division found three weapons caches in the town of Karabila Friday.

The first cache found consisted of two 155mm artillery rounds, the second one had four AK-47s and one rocket propelled grenade, and the third cache had one 120mm mortar, said Sgt. Mike L. Hernandez, an infantry squad leader, Co. D, 1st Bn., 66th AR, 1st BCT, 4th Inf. Div.

"A local national source provided intelligence to the brigade, which was handed down to the battalion, and then to us, and since the caches were in my

area of operations, it was my job to find, exploit and dispose of the cache site in order to keep the civilian population in the area safe," said Capt. Jonathan S. Bender, commander of Co. D, 1st Bn., 66th AR, 1st BCT, 4th Inf. Div.

"The mission was to search to the west of the town for enemy activity," Hernandez said. "We were given a grid coordinate of a possible cache Friday morning."

Company D had a few helpful assets for the duration of their search, which helped them to uncover the caches.

"We had a canine search team, four Iraqi army soldiers and metal detecting assets," Hernandez said.

One suspect, a local Sunni farmer, was apprehended after the three caches were discovered and taken in for questioning.

"The suspect was digging in the immediate area when we found him, and it was his property," Hernandez said. "He was guilty by association, and the decision was made to detain him and ask further questions."

The actions of the farmer partly gave him away as a suspect involved with the caches.

"Other guys were actually farming, and he was just standing around with a pick axe, picking a bit at the cache site," Bender said. "We detained him on the site and took him to an area within our joint security compound, where he was tactically questioned."

The suspect was put in a Co. D truck and transported to their detention holding area on

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I Do...Again!

Spc. Edward Michek, tanker, Company C, 1st Battalion, 66th Armor Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division and his wife Alicia renew their vows on their two year anniversary at the North Fort Hood Chapel April 29. Edward and Alicia have been apart due to deployments and a tour in Korea since their marriage. The couple bought a house in the Fort Hood area three days before he deployed to Iraq.

(U.S. Army photo by Spc. David Hodge, 1st BCT, PAO, 4th Inf. Div.)

1-66 AR touches down near Karabila

Story and photos by Pvt.
Christopher M. Gaylord
13th Public Affairs Det.

Soldiers from Company C, 1st Battalion, 66th Armored Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division and eight Iraqi Army soldiers conducted an air assault mission near the town of Karabila to speak with local nationals, Saturday.

"The purpose of the mission was go in and talk to residents of Karabila to see if they had any information on mortar activity or anti-Iraqi forces activity in their area," said 2nd Lt. Jonathan M. Dell, 3rd platoon leader, Co. C, 1st Bn., 66th AR, 1st BCT, 4th Inf. Div.

The Soldiers touched down northwest of Karabila in two separate lifts and pulled security while Capt. Roman D. Izzo, the commander of Co. C, spoke with civilians in the town.

"We tactically questioned local national informants and found out they are very scared and have been threatened by anti-Iraqi forces," said Izzo. "Once they felt it was safe, they said there is an AIF cell that comes in,

chases them out of their homes, and hides stuff there."

Another purpose of the mission was to question the informants about a missing Soldier, Spc. Christopher Eplee, assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 1st Special Troops Bn., 1st BCT, 4th Inf. Div.

"He has been missing for about 48 hours," said Izzo. "Our informants believe that the AIF cell, if they have the missing Soldier, will bring him to their area Saturday night."

Saturday night, the same units conducted a second air assault, based on the information from the locals.

"We're going to conduct an air assault, secure the area, locate the missing Soldier and detain any AIF we find in the objective area," said Izzo. "We'll also protect our informants and help them in any way."

"Tonight, we have the potential for hostiles, so we will approach the area a bit more cautiously this time," said Izzo.

As for the air assault mission conducted during the day, it was very successful.

"It went quite well," said Izzo. "We



Soldiers from 1st Battalion, 66th Armored Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division questioned the towns people of Karabila Saturday.

have a lot of guys whose primary mission is not air assault, and they learned fast and performed well."

"The mission was executed very quickly and right as planned," said Dell.

Co. B, 1-66 AR conducts aerial reconnaissance

Story by Pfc. Adam C.
Blazak
13th Public Affairs Det.

Iraqi and Coalition Forces conducted an air assault reconnaissance mission today in the small village of Al Batha, Iraq.

Intelligence indicated that there was a possible mortar cell in the area so nationals in the area were

tactically questioned, said Capt. Ed Kennedy, the officer in charge with Company B, 1st Battalion, 66th Armored Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division.

Four Iraqis in the village were present and were interviewed by members of a support team.

"We tactically questioned the farmers in

the village," said Sgt. Vincent M. Boyd, a human intelligence collector with Co. A, 1st Special Troops Bn., 1st BCT, 4th Inf. Div. "We need to know the who and where so the mortar attacks can be stopped."

The Iraqis that were questioned denied knowing who was responsible for the mortar

attacks or where a mortar cell existed, Boyd said.

"The overall mission went well," said Staff Sgt. David L. Parker, a squad leader with Co. B, 1st Bn., 66th AR, 1st BCT, 4th Inf. Div. "This mission broke the rust off those of us who have been down range and the new guys got some oil put on them."

Chaplain's Corner:

Battle-Focused Training: Beyond the FTX

Story by Ch. (Capt.) Kevin Banks
1st Bn., 66th AR

Battle-Focused Training is the term used to describe the training methods the Army uses so that every American Soldier can enter combat confident that he is the best equipped, best trained war-fighter in the world, and is part of a winning team. This FTX has been an example of that kind of

regimen to address the personal issues of life in preparation for deployment.

Each Soldier should ask himself/herself, "What am I doing to prepare myself and my Family spiritually, emotionally, mentally, relationally, and practically for the stresses of combat and separation?" If you cannot answer with a specific plan, it is time to make one.

Here are just a few examples of steps I recommend that you could take:

1) Place emphasis on yours and your Family's spiritual growth through prayer, reading the literature of your faith, and joining a community of faith with which to worship regularly.

2) Get some marriage counseling if you have some specific ongoing issues to address, such as the most common challenges of communication, conflict resolution, finances, or trust.

3) Attend a marriage enrichment retreat, or take marriage or parenting classes at the Chaplain Family Life Center.

4) Take a fun family trip or vacation.

5) Get some help for resolving

possible post traumatic stress disorder symptoms or anger management.

6) Single Soldiers should avoid marrying someone they have not known for a long time and do not know very well.

7) Adopt healthy stress management habits, like developing a positive perspective on life's challenges, identifying people you can trust to talk out your problems with, getting adequate exercise and rest, eating healthy foods, and turning to your faith for support.

The Army and the local community have multiple resources to address all these and other needs you may have. I think we would all agree that it would be unwise for our unit's tactical training to start one month prior to deployment. Likewise, let us not wait until the last hour to address our personal issues: the time is now.

The New Testament reads in Titus 3:1, "Remind the people to....*always be prepared* for every good work..." Deploying to defend freedom is a good work.

Every Soldier will be exposed to tactical "Battle-Focused Training" in preparation for that work. Every Soldier and Family member should take the initiative to become engaged in the opportunities available for personal and Family "Battle-Focused Training," as well. Both are necessary for our success, and may God bless the Iron Knights!

The New Testament reads in Titus 3:1, "Remind the people to....always be prepared for every good work..." Deploying to defend freedom is a good work.

training.

However, there are more aspects to combat readiness than can be adequately trained on any FTX, namely a Soldier's spiritual, emotional, mental, and Family readiness. Yet, these aspects of a Soldier's life are essential to his overall effectiveness in combat and to his personal life outside combat.

Therefore, all Soldiers and their families should make the most of their time to develop their own "Battle-Focused Training"

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newsletter:

Team Angel not only captured a terrorist cell leader in Gumruk, they also captured the individual responsible for the shoot-down of an American Helicopter.

Team Bayonet was responsible for capturing the Ubaydi cell leader, and bringing security to Ubaydi by securing a cache site consisting of several weapons and ammunition.

Team Crazy captured the leader of a Jaysh al-Mahdi cell in Al Qaim. This cell leader was responsible for financing and arranging kidnappings for the ransom of civilians. They also set the example of “never leaving a fallen comrade” by rescuing an American Soldier held captive by insurgents.

Team Darkrider, in coordination with Crazy Horse, worked to stem the sectarian violence between Karabila and Al Qaim. The Darkrider’s efforts led to the first visit by the Qada chairman to the Shia enclave of Al Qaim since the Golden Mosque bombing.

Team Easy worked hard to improve the conditions in the impoverished town of Al Batha. Food and water deliveries have increased and Easy Soldiers provided much needed medical supplies to the villagers.

Team Havoc successfully conducted medical operations to improve the standard of medical care for the civilians in the Iron Knight area of operations. The Scouts and Mortars continue to support the battalion throughout

the area and the staff continues to “row well” for the multiple tasks it must manage on a daily basis.

Team Fighter provided much need food and logistical support to the battalion as a whole. Without Fighter’s long hours and hard work, the Iron Knights could not sustain the constant presence that is so critical to gaining Iraqi trust and confidence.

Finally, I cannot thank the Families enough for all your thoughts and prayers, and the support you continue to provide; you are our inspiration. You are truly the driving factor behind everything we do and stand for as Soldiers. May God Bless you and all of our Iron Knights!

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ordnance reports, local national engagements, aviation, and prisoner of war searches, just to name a few; all have paid off enormously.

The Iron Knights have taken on the challenge and are continuing to excel in all areas every day. The Soldiers are motivated and positive about their mission and purpose while executing other missions like medical operations, logistical support, and participating in talks

with key leaders in the Iraqi population. We have been tested on our ability to defeat insurgents, placement/trafficking of IEDs and IED making material, suicide bombers, and terrorists in order to maintain our right for freedom and to assist in the freedom around the world. Leaders of all ranks owe it to our Soldiers to ensure their success on the battlefield and it is showing daily.

We ask that all Families and people

throughout our country continue their support and dedication to our Soldiers; they have sacrificed much more than you could imagine. To the Soldiers of the Iron Knights, terrific job during this deployment, continue to deliver on every task, mission, job, patrol, raid, and all that is asked of you to keep our nation free of terrorism. Iron Knights!

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Forward Operating Base Raider, Bender said.

Explosive Ordnance Disposal came out and had a bomb disposal unit identify the ordnance and dispose of it, Bender

said.

“After we exploited the cache site and found we were dealing with ordnance, we called EOD,” Bender said.

In the end, the mission went

well, and was a huge success on the part of Co. D and in helping make sure the civilian population of the town stays safe.

“The mission went perfect,” Hernandez said.